

The Complete Tales of Uncle Remus Study Guide

**The Complete Tales of Uncle Remus by Joel Chandler
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Section 1, Uncle Remus, His Songs and Stories, 1 through 11

Section 1, Uncle Remus, His Songs and Stories, 1 through 11 Summary

In "Uncle Remus Initiates the Little Boy," "Miss Sally" is searching for her seven-year-old son and finds him listening to stories told to him by Uncle Remus. On this particular evening, Uncle Remus is telling a story of Brer Fox and Brer Rabbit. Brer Fox tells Brer Rabbit that he wants to "have a confab", but Brer Rabbit says that he's "full of fleas" and warns Brer Fox that he must keep his distance. Brer Fox asks if he could come to dinner and Brer Rabbit extends the invitation.

Uncle Remus next tells "The Wonderful Tar Baby Story". In this tale, Brer Fox shapes tar into a human-like form. Brer Rabbit comes along and says "howdy" to the "tar baby," who - of course - says nothing. After Brer Rabbit continues to say hello and getting no response, Brer Rabbit smacks the tar baby with his fist, getting his hand stuck. He repeats the process, continuing to threaten the tar baby, until he has all four feet and hands stuck in the tar. There the story ends for the night as the little boy is called home and Uncle Remus will pick it up soon.

In "Why Mr. Possum Loves Peace", Uncle Remus explains that Brer Coon and Brer Possum encounter a dog who makes "a pass" at Brer Possum, who grins from ear to ear and keels over. Brer Coon fights the dog and when he's chased the dog away, says the possum is a coward. Brer Possum says that he wasn't afraid, that the dog had tickled his "short ribs", and, to this day, Brer Possum will fall over as if he's dead whenever he's touched on the ribs.

The next night, the little boy asks Uncle Remus asks what happened when Brer Rabbit was caught by the tar baby. Uncle Remus says Brer Fox steps from the bushes and threatens several methods of death for Brer Rabbit, ranging from drowning to skinning. Brer Rabbit continues to agree that any method of death would be acceptable as long as Brer Fox doesn't throw him into a nearby briar patch - which Brer Fox eventually does because he believes it would be the most horrible death for the rabbit. Brer Rabbit, having been born and bred in a briar patch, is quite at home and hops merrily and safely away.

Uncle Remus next tells "The Story of the Deluge and How It Came About". He says that there was a time when all the creatures gathered to make decisions. During one meeting, the elephant steps on a crawdad. When yet another gets squashed, all the crawdads that remained bore holes into the ground and up comes water until all the creatures were drowned - all because they "let on 'mong deyselves dat dey wuz bigger dan de Crawfishes".



In "Mr. Rabbit Grossly Deceives Mr. Fox", Uncle Remus says Brer Rabbit tells that his father once owned Brer Fox and used him as a horse. Brer Fox demands that he retract the story. Brer Rabbit says he is too ill to go to Miss Meadows' house. Brer Fox offers to carry him, but Brer Rabbit claims to be afraid of being dropped. He convinces Brer Fox to don a saddle and bridle so that Brer Rabbit won't fall off his back, and blinders so that Brer Fox won't get startled and drop him. The next night, Uncle Remus continues his story of how "Mr. Fox Is Again Victimized". The agreement is that Brer Rabbit would get off Brer Fox's back just before reaching Miss Meadows' house. Brer Rabbit dons spurs and just before they reach the destination, he spurs Brer Fox, making him run wildly past Miss Meadows, thereby confirming the story, though Brer Rabbit later tells Miss Meadows that Brer Fox is almost ready to be put out to pasture. Brer Fox is so angry that he chases Brer Rabbit into a hollow tree but has to go home for his ax, leaving Brer Buzzard to make sure Brer Rabbit doesn't leave. Soon Brer Rabbit tells Brer Buzzard that there's a wonderful squirrel in the hollow tree, Brer Buzzard puts his head into the hole on one side and Brer Rabbit escapes out the other.

In "Mr. Fox is Outdone by Mr. Buzzard", Uncle Remus picks up the story, saying that Brer Fox returns, begins to chop with Brer Buzzard swearing that the rabbit was still in the tree until Brer Fox realizes he isn't. Then Brer Fox grabs the buzzard by the tail and most of his feathers come out.

The following night, Uncle Remus says that Brer Rabbit heads home after his encounter with Brer Fox and sees Miss Cow. He says there are persimmons up a particular tree and asks Miss Cow to butt the tree so they'll fall. Miss Cow does and gets her horn stuck in the tree. While she's stuck, Brer Rabbit summons his entire family with buckets and they milk Miss Cow. She finally gets free and the next day pretends to be stuck again, teasing Brer Rabbit. When he's close, she chases him, but he gets away.

Uncle Remus next introduces a new character in "Mr. Terrapin Appears Upon the Scene". He says that one day Brer Rabbit and Mr. Terrapin visited Miss Meadows and Brer Fox arrives. During a commotion, Brer "Tarrypin" falls from a shelf, striking Brer Fox and knocking him out. When he comes to, Brer Rabbit is up the chimney and when Brer Fox looks up toward him, Brer Rabbit spits "rabbit tobacco" in his eye, making Brer Fox run away to find water to wash out his eyes.

Brer Fox and Brer Wolf make a plan to fool Brer Rabbit. Brer Fox goes home, gets in bed and pretends to be dead. Brer Wolf goes to Brer Rabbit's house and tells of the "death", knowing that Brer Rabbit will go check it out. There, Brer Rabbit isn't at all certain that the fox is dead, tries several times to make him talk and eventually says that Brer Fox can't be dead because dead folks - upon getting a visit from a friend - raise their leg and yell "wahoo", which Brer Fox does so that Brer Rabbit knows he isn't dead and runs away.



Section 1, Uncle Remus, His Songs and Stories, 1 through 11 Analysis

When Brer Fox arrives for dinner in the first story, Brer Rabbit doesn't answer the door but does sing out, "De place wharbouts you pill de grease, right dar you are bound' ter slide, An' whar you fin' a bunch er ha'r, You'll sholy fine de hide". There's no explanation for why that makes Brer Fox leave, but it seems likely that it is a sign of the times in which Uncle Remus lives. The following day, Brer Fox sends his excuses to Brer Rabbit, saying he'd been too ill to visit. Brer Rabbit goes to visit Brer Fox the following day. Brer Fox is wrapped up in with flannel and there's no dinner cooked. When Brer Rabbit says that it looks as if Brer Fox is planning to have chicken for supper, Brer Fox says he is and Brer Rabbit, knowing that Brer Fox really means to eat him, runs away. Uncle Remus finishes this tale by telling the little boy that Brer Fox still hasn't caught Brer Rabbit and that he isn't going to.

The Wonderful Tar Baby is arguably one of the best known of the Uncle Remus stories. This is a classic tale of someone who gets his way by insisting it would be horrible. In this case, it works beautifully and allows the rabbit - caught by the fox for the first time - to escape completely.

In Uncle Remus's story of the crayfishes creating a deluge, the little boy asks about Noah and the ark. Uncle Remus admonishes him that Noah took care of the ark because it was Noah's job to do so, and that the little boy shouldn't bother with that part of the story unless his mother brings it up. This is a classic example of two cultures colliding - the old Negro's limited information about Christianity because he probably isn't able to read and the Christianity being taught to the little boy.



Section 1, Uncle Remus, His Songs and Stories, 11 through 22

Section 1, Uncle Remus, His Songs and Stories, 11 through 22 Summary

Uncle Remus next tells the story of how "Mr. Fox Tackles Old Man Tarrypin". Brer Fox managed to catch hold of Brer Terrapin's tail and was going to drown him when Brer Terrapin begins yelling for Brer Fox to turn loose of the root and "ketch holt" of him. Soon Brer Fox is confused, fears he does have a root, turns loose of Brer Terrapin's tail and the terrapin swims away - comfortable as the little boy would be in bed.

In "The Awful Fate of Mr. Wolf", Brer Wolf continually raids Brer Rabbit's home until the day dogs chase him and he begs Brer Rabbit for help. Brer Rabbit gives him a chair, locks him in a chest, and pours hot water over him until he's dead. Uncle Remus finishes this tale by saying that if someone visits Brer Rabbit now, he might find the hide of Brer Wolf hanging on the back porch.

Uncle Remus lends his distinctive voice to the story of "Mr. Fox and the Deceitful Frogs". He says that the terrapin says, "I-doom-er-ker-du-mer-ker". On a particular day, the terrapin was saying this to a frog who replied, "knee-deep". The fox, listening, hears more of the conversation including, "wade in!" and "dar-you'll-fin'-yo'-brudder", which prompts the fox to look into the water, see his reflection and fall in, barely escaping the "Mud Turtle".

In "Mr. Fox Goes a-Hunting, but Mr. Rabbit Bags the Game", Uncle Remus says that the two arch enemies had become more friendly and Brer Fox invited Brer Rabbit to go hunting. Brer Rabbit declines, saying he has other business. Later he sees Brer Fox returning with his game bag and lays on the road, pretending to be dead. Brer Fox notes the dead rabbit and apparently plans to go put down his game bag full of game and return for the dead rabbit. Brer Rabbit then rushes ahead and plays the same trick. This time, Brer Fox leaves his game bag and rushes home to get another bag. A few days later, Brer Rabbit asks Brer Fox what he caught on his hunting trip and Brer Fox answers nothing but common sense, prompting the rabbit to say he could have loaned the fox some, had he only asked.

One day, Uncle Remus tells the little boy that Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox were like some children he knows - always trying to get out of chores. In "Old Mr. Rabbit, He's a Good Fisherman", Uncle Remus tells that several of the animals have gathered to clear land for a corn patch when Brer Rabbit, pretending to have a briar in his hand, slips off to rest. He finds a well, gets in the bucket and immediately falls to the water but doesn't tip. He's afraid to make any noise that might upset the bucket and Brer Fox, who saw him fall in, believes the rabbit must be checking his stash of treasure. He yells down to the rabbit who says he's fishing in an effort to provide supper for the workers, that there are



lots of fish, and invites the fox down. The fox jumps in the opposite bucket and, weighing more, pulls the rabbit up. The rabbit yells down that there's someone waiting for the fox with a gun, reels him up and the fox runs away without looking. Later, they share the joke that they'd been in the well while the others worked, but don't say a word.

In "Brer Rabbit Nibbles Up the Butter", Uncle Remus says the animals are working one day when the rabbit continues to sneak off to have a taste of butter until it's all gone. The animals wonder who could have eaten the butter and the rabbit convinces them to take a nap and Brer Rabbit smears the butter from his own paws onto Brer Possum's face, waking Brer Fox and pointing out the evidence. Brer Possum then suggests that the one who ate the butter will be unable to jump high, and builds a bonfire. The rabbit jumps over; the fox makes it almost over, catches his tail afire and that's the reason a fox's tail has a white tip; and the possum falls in the fire and dies.

One night, Uncle Remus tells a version of the classic tale of the race between the tortoise and the hare. In this version, called, "Mr. Rabbit Finds His Match at Last", Brer Terrapin and Brer Rabbit bet fifty dollars on five-mile race. Brer Terrapin stations his wife at the starting line, each of his three children at the one-mile points along the way and himself just short of the finish line. The terrapins are all identical and all are to run through the woods while the rabbit takes the road and no one notices that they each head for home instead of going on with the course. Brer Terrapin wins, though it's not an honest victory, and collects the purse.

In "The Fate of Mr. Jack Sparrow", Uncle Remus says that Brer Fox is one day planning to get even with Brer Terrapin for the race, announces his intentions out loud, and Brer Sparrow immediately says he's going to tell Brer Fox of the plans. Brer Rabbit hurries to find Brer Fox, says the sparrow had just told him that Brer Fox was planning to wreak havoc on the rabbit's family - which isn't true, of course. This makes Brer Fox unwilling to hear anything the sparrow is going to tell and when the sparrow arrives, the fox tells him to hop on his tail so that he can hear the sparrow's story better, then on his back, then his head and then his tooth, at which time he eats the sparrow.

In the story of "How Mr. Rabbit Saved His Meat", Uncle Remus says that one day Brer Rabbit took some fish Brer Wolf had just caught and Brer Wolf demanded restitution in the form of Brer Rabbit's best cow. After he'd killed the cow, Brer Rabbit yelled of danger and while Brer Wolf was gone, butchered the cow, sticking the end of the tail into the ground and telling the wolf, upon his return, that the cow was in the ground. Though the wolf dug, he never found the cow.

Uncle Remus next tells the story of how "Mr. Rabbit Meets His Match Again". The rabbit doesn't like to get wet and the buzzard agrees to fly across the river to a gold mine with the rabbit on his back, but stops in the middle of the river, frightening the rabbit who was weak in the knees for a month.

In "A Story About the Little Rabbits", Uncle Remus tells of Brer Fox dropping in when the mama and daddy rabbit had left the babies alone. As the fox tries to think of an excuse to eat the baby rabbits, he tells them to do things, apparently planning to eat



them if they can't do as he says. A bird gives them advice and they continue to succeed at every chore until their father comes home and the fox leaves.

Section 1, Uncle Remus, His Songs and Stories, 11 through 22 Analysis

The little boy sometimes brings treats to Uncle Remus and they are always greatly appreciated. It's noteworthy that the little boy need not have done so, that he could also have brought a treat and shared it with Uncle Remus. Instead, the little boy gives Uncle Remus the entire amount and leaves it to the old man to share - which he does though he sometimes puts some aside for himself for later as well. Uncle Remus sometimes says that the lady of the house, Miss Sally, is going to be thinking she has big rats when she finds cakes missing.

The story of the wolf's death is somewhat gruesome, though Uncle Remus says that the rabbit tells the wolf that the scalding water dripping onto him through holes in the chest are fleas. Uncle Remus includes the detail that the wolf said the fleas are "eating him up", and that those were the last words he utters before he dies.

The little boy isn't happy with the fact that the possum dies for eating the butter when he wasn't guilty. Uncle Remus says that life isn't fair, that there are those who always pay for the wrongs committed by others, and that the "Tribulation" is waiting just around the corner for everyone. Likewise, the little boy is upset that the turtles cheat in the story of the race. Uncle Remus says that all animals cheat and that cheating spreads. He says the one person the little boy doesn't have to worry about cheating is "de ole niggers".

Uncle Remus uses the story of the sparrow to describe to the little boy why he shouldn't tell stories on his younger brother. The author notes that this story appears in many forms.

The little boy has soon come to idolize the rabbit and hates to hear that the rabbit might be bested. Uncle Remus tells him that there's no one so smart that he can't be outsmarted.

While the animals have voices and the ability to reason in Uncle Remus's stories, they also have taken over many of the characteristics of people while retaining some of their own. For example, Brer Rabbit tricks Brer Fox out of his game, though rabbits don't eat meat. The rabbits also tricked the cow into giving them her milk. In several places, Uncle Remus talks of the animals who smoke "seegars". This curious mixture works, making the reader continually see the animals as very human-like.



Section 1, Uncle Remus, His Songs and Stories, 23 through 34

Section 1, Uncle Remus, His Songs and Stories, 23 through 34 Summary

The stories continue in this vein. In "Mr. Rabbit and Mr. Bear", Uncle Remus says that the fox set a trap to catch the rabbit who was stealing his peanuts. The rabbit, hanging in the trap, told Brer Bear that he was being paid to be a scarecrow. When the two traded places, the rabbit told the fox that he'd caught his thief. As the bear chased the rabbit, the rabbit hid in a mud hole, pretending to be a frog and saying the rabbit had passed by. In "Mr. Bear Catches Old Man Bullfrog", the bear catches and threatens death to the frog for telling him that the rabbit had passed by. The frog agrees to let the bear kill him with an ax but hops away while the bear prepares to swing.

In "Mr. Terrapin Shows His Strength", the animals are all gathered at a candy pulling at Miss Meadows, each with his own job and under the "flag of truce" insisted on by Miss Meadows, when Brer Terrapin says he's stronger than Brer Bear. They use Miss Meadows' bed cord as a rope and go to the stream where the terrapin ties the rope to a submerged log and makes the others believe that he was strong enough to withstand the bear's pulls.

Uncle Remus tells the story of "The End of Brer Bear". Brer Rabbit tells Brer Bear that he knows of a honey tree. Brer Bear climbs the tree and sticks his head in the hole. Brer Rabbit is supposed to shove the honey upwards with a stick shoved into a lower hole but "stirs" the bees instead so that they sting the bear, his head swells so that he can't get it out of the hole and, as Uncle Remus says, is likely still there today.

As Uncle Remus begins the tale of "Mr. Fox Gets Into Serious Business", he says there was a man and the little boy wants to know the man's name. Uncle Remus says that either no one ever told him or that he can't remember and they agree to simply call him "Mr. Man." Mr. Man set a trap and caught Brer Rabbit, who tells Brer Fox that Miss Meadows tied him up there to make certain he would come to a party. The two switch places and Brer Rabbit returns in time to see Mr. Man beat on the fox with rushes, then go to get his dogs, at which time Brer Rabbit, after being assured by the fox that there were no hard feelings, releases Brer Fox and they both run before the dogs arrive.

In "How Mr. Rabbit Succeeded in Raising a Dust", Uncle Remus tells of the rabbit's deception, whereby he puts ashes in his slippers to win a challenge calling for one of the animals to make dust from a rock and earning him the right to marry "Miss Molly Cottontail". Uncle Remus next moves from the stories of animals to tell of "The Plantation Witch". He says that there was a village haunted by a witch and a man who suspected his brother lay awake one night to find that his "brer" shed his skin like a suit and flew from the house in the form of a bat. The man salted the inside of the skin and



when the owner returned, rolled around on the ground in agony over the salt on the skin which stopped his conjuring ways. Uncle Remus says if there were other witches in the neighborhood, they made certain no one knew.

In "Jacky-My-Lantern", Uncle Remus tells of a wager between a blacksmith and the Devil in which the blacksmith was allowed into neither Heaven nor Hell, and roams in between, sometimes showing himself as a "Jacky-my-lantern", though Uncle Remus is smart enough not to follow one when it appears.

Uncle Remus, in "Why the Negro Is Black", explains that all people were once black until a water was discovered that washed the body white. Many jumped right in and became white, but the water was murky by the time others arrived and they were to be the mulattos. The last had only enough water to wash the palms of their hands and soles of the feet - the current blacks.

The section ends with the story of "The Sad Fate of Mr. Fox". Uncle Remus says that Brer Rabbit wants to know where Brer Fox got some beef. The two go to a field where the fox yells "Bookay". When a particular cow opens its mouth, the two jump in and begin carving, with Brer Fox warning against cutting in a particular area, which the rabbit does, killing the cow. The next morning, the cow's owner arrives, cuts open the cow and finds the rabbit first, who tells which organ Brer Fox is hiding in. The man kills the fox and Brer Rabbit takes the head to the fox's wife, disguising the fact that it's his head and telling her to cook it. The fox's son, Tobe, makes the discovery and they try to kill the rabbit, but he escapes.

Section 1, Uncle Remus, His Songs and Stories, 23 through 34 Analysis

There are many stories that explain why things are as they are. In "How Mr. Rabbit Lost His Fine Bushy Tail", Uncle Remus tells the little boy that the rabbit once had a long bushy tail, was told that he could use it to fish with and left it hanging in the cold creek all night. The next morning, it broke off and rabbits ever since have had only a tiny tail.

In the story of "Why Mr. Possum Has No Hair on His Tail", Uncle Remus says that Brer Bear caught Brer Possum in his persimmon orchard one day and continued grabbing at his tail until there was no hair left. To this day, possums have no hair on their tails.

In the story of "The End of Brer Bear", Uncle Remus says the rabbit asks about "Miss Brune and Miss Brindle". At the little boy's prompting, he says that one was Brer Bear's woman and the other "his gal". It's interesting that whenever the little boy questions a particular point, Uncle Remus says that he's just repeating the stories as they were told to him. With that in mind, it's unclear how many of these stories were products of his own imagination and how many really were told to him by elder members of his own family, just as he's now passing them down to the little boy.



As Uncle Remus talks of the "ha'nts" and witches, the little boy says his father says there are no such things. Uncle Remus counters by saying the little boy's father hasn't lived as long - or seen as much - as Uncle Remus. After telling the scary story, Uncle Remus has to walk the little boy home, and it's noted that he doesn't mind that a bit. That night, he lies awake himself, half expecting a visit "from some mysterious source", but it doesn't happen.



Section 2, Nights with Uncle Remus, 1 through 12

Section 2, Nights with Uncle Remus, 1 through 12 Summary

One night, Miss Sally sends 'Tildy to take Uncle Remus his supper because it was raining. The little boy asks to go along and soon asks Uncle Remus about the goose's habit of standing on one leg, which prompts the tale of "Mr. Fox and Miss Goose", in which Miss Goose - who wasn't too proud to take in washing for the white folks - climbs onto the rafters one night to sleep leaving a bundle of clothes on her bed in an effort to fool the fox. The fox grabs the clothes and the dog chases the fox, prompting their enmity to this day, though Brer Fox believes Brer Rabbit set the dog on him.

In "Brother Fox Catches Mr. Horse", Brer Rabbit tells the fox that he knows where there's a horse laying down and convinces the fox to tie himself to the horse's tail to hold down the horse. When the horse stands, the fox is dangling well off the ground and the horse eventually kicks him, sending him flying while Brer Rabbit yells that the fox almost has the horse pinned down. The fox soon realizes he was tricked into trying to hold down the horse.

In "Brother Rabbit and the Little Girl", Uncle Remus says Brer Rabbit tricked a girl into letting him into the family garden every day until her father caught him and tied him up, leaving the little girl to make certain the rabbit didn't get away. But Brer Rabbit offers to dance, though he'd have to be untied to do so, and the little girl releases him so that he dances, right out of the garden and all the way home.

Uncle Remus uses the story of "How Brother Fox Was Too Smart" to explain why the little boy shouldn't be acting like the Faver children. Brer Fox decides to use the rabbit's trick of playing dead on Mr. Man, but the man carefully checks for the cause of death, becoming suspicious when there are no wounds on the fox. Then he hits the fox with his whip, prompting him to run before he can be hit again.

In "Brother Rabbit's Astonishing Prank", the rabbit goes to Brer Bear's house when no one is home, snoops around, and has a bucket of honey fall on him from a high cabinet, covering him. In an effort to get the honey off, he rolls in the leaves, which stick to him, and in this fearful condition makes everyone run. When he meets Brer Fox and Brer Wolf, he yells out that the "Wull-er-de-Wust", and that's he come for them. The story soon circulates so that the girls at Miss Meadows' house laughingly ask if they aren't afraid of being caught.

Uncle Remus next tells how "Brother Rabbit Secures a Mansion". All the animals build a big house, though Brer Rabbit rushes around acting busy without doing anything at all. When the house is finished, he sets off a cannon as the noise he makes when he sits



down in his room, then pours a bucket of "nasty slop water" down the stairwell as what happens when he spits tobacco juice, forcing all the other animals to abandon the house to Brer Rabbit.

Uncle Remus offers his version of the Three Little Pigs in "The Story of the Pigs", prompted by his insistence that there once had been a shortage of hog bristles because the mama pig had died, leaving her four youngsters alone. They build a house each, of brush, sticks, wood and rock, managing to eat all the pigs except the last - Runt - who was plagued with the ability to reason just like grown people - and who burned the wolf to a crisp, ending the life of that particular Brer Wolf.

The story of "Mr. Benjamin Ram and His Wonderful Fiddle" tells of Benjamin Ram - a fiddler - who lost his way and ended up at Brer Wolf's house, where the wolves plan to eat him. When the ram tunes up the fiddle and plays, it frightens the wolves who run away, leaving the ram to eat supper, warm himself, and continue on his way. The next story is "Brother Rabbit's Riddle", in which Brer Rabbit traps Brer Fox in Brer Bear's bee gum, then provides a riddle to direct the fox's grandfather to his location.

Section 2, Nights with Uncle Remus, 1 through 12 Analysis

In the story of "Mr. Lion Hunts for Mr. Man", Uncle Remus likens the attitude of Brer Lion to "one er deze yer town nigger". Uncle Remus says that the lion was looking to give Mr. Man "a larrupin", and continues on his quest despite the advice from other animals to let it go. The lion doesn't recognize the man, who is splitting rails. The man says he'll go fetch "Mr. Man" if the lion will just slip his paw into the split. Once the lion's paw is in, he's caught and Mr. Man whips him soundly.

The house girl named 'Tildy one night listens to the story of "How Mr. Rooster Lost His Dinner". The fowls of one plantation invited the fowls of another for a party and Mr. Rooster, seeing the dinner table laden with nothing but cornbread and ash cakes, refuses to eat. The other birds soon discover there is a feast under the pile of cornbread, which is the reason chickens scratch when they are eating, though they never find another feast like that one.

In the story of how "Brother Rabbit Breaks Up a Party", Uncle Remus describes a party where there's plenty of drinking going on. Brer Rabbit comes along with a drum, frightening everyone away and then drinks while they're gone. The judge and jury decides his punishment will be drowning but Brer Rabbit, armed with his walking stick, hops away through the water because it wasn't deep enough.



Section 2, Nights with Uncle Remus, 13 through 24

Section 2, Nights with Uncle Remus, 13 through 24 Summary

In "Brother Fox, Brother Rabbit and King Deer's Daughter", both the fox and rabbit are sweet on the deer's daughter and Brer Rabbit kills two of the deer's goats, blaming it on the fox in order to eliminate the fox as competition.

The next two stories are "Brother Terrapin Deceives Brother Buzzard" and "Brother Fox Covets the Quills". Brer Terrapin and Brer Buzzard make a pact to search for honey together, but when the turtle finds a nest, he eats all the honey. Knowing the buzzard will be angry, he sends the buzzard into the empty nest where he's built a small fire, rolls a rock over the entrance, and urges the buzzard to flap his wings to keep the bees away. The flapping fans the flames and all that's left of the buzzard are the quills from one wing. Brer fox wants those and snatches them from the terrapin, who camouflages himself with mud and bites onto the fox's foot until he gets his quills back.

In "A Dream and a Story", the little boy says he dreamed of the creatures and Uncle Remus says he often does. Then he tells of the wolf and fox fighting, ending with the fox hiding in a hollow tree and the wolf clogging the hole. After a few days, the buzzard, believing the fox must be dead, unclogs the hole, setting the fox free, who then kills the buzzard.

In "The Moon in the Mill-Pond", Brer Rabbit points out the reflection of the moon while Brer Terrapin says that who ever can pull the moon from the water will also pull up treasure, prompting the bear, fox, and wolf to insist on operating the seine. The wet creatures, unsuccessful in their endeavor, have to go home while the rabbit and terrapin spend the evening with Miss Meadows and the girls.

On night, the little boy jumps when a hickory nuts falls on the roof of Uncle Remus's cabin, prompting the old man to tell a story. In "Brother Rabbit Takes Some Exercise", Brer Rabbit hears Mr. Man chop down a tree, which frightens him into running. When he sees the coon and says there was a terrible noise, the coon runs, spreading the news to another animal who tells another until they're all running without knowing why until they return to Brer Rabbit's house to ask.

On another night, the little boy arrives and Uncle Remus soon discovers that he was acting up and was sent from the table. When the little boy's father calls, Uncle Remus yells out that the little boy is "crying his eyes out", that Uncle Remus never stood for mistreatment of Miss Sally and won't stand for this so that Tildy brings the boy's supper to him which he trades to Uncle Remus for a roasted sweet potato. Then comes the story of "Why Brother Bear Has No Tail". The terrapin and mud turtle were sliding down



a moss-covered stone when the bear arrives, asking why the rabbit wasn't sliding. Brer Rabbit says he'd had his fun and that it was a shame the bear couldn't take a turn, prompting the bear to go down the stone so fast that his tail broke off.

In "How Brother Rabbit Frightened His Neighbors", Uncle Remus tells of the animals' lives - like that of people - that were sometimes up and other times down with some years producing good crops and some years producing little. One year, Brer Rabbit had a good peanut crop and, at his wife's urging, planned to go to town to buy cups and plates for the children and a coffee pot for her. On his way home, he found all the neighbors near one particular spot, put the coffee pot on his head, the cups on his suspenders and held the plates, rushing toward them all and frightening them to run away.

Section 2, Nights with Uncle Remus, 13 through 24 Analysis

Uncle Remus tells the story of "How Brother Fox Failed to Get His Grapes" in the little boy's nursery as the child recovers from an illness. The story outlines the competition between the fox and the rabbit for the favor of Miss Meadows and the girls. Brer Rabbit tells Brer Fox about a patch of fat grapes and that he'll have to brush the bugs away before he eats them, but the grapes are actually covered with wasps, meaning Brer Rabbit gets to take the fox's place at that night's dinner with Miss Meadows.

The following night, Uncle Remus again goes to the house, this time telling how "Mr. Fox Figures As an Incendiary". Brer Fox tells the terrapin that he can see "the Ole Boy" from a point in the middle of the field but sets the field afire. Meanwhile, Brer Rabbit digs a hole for himself and helps the terrapin atop a high stump so that they're safe, then yells for Brer Fox to come see, prompting him to jump into the still burning field and injure himself. There's then silence and when Miss Sally comes to investigate, she finds both Uncle Remus and the little boy sound asleep, making the old man say it's just lucky that Miss Sally should just be thankful that he hadn't snored.

In "Mr. Man Has Some Meat", Brer Rabbit tells the man the meat smells and that he should drag it behind him to restore it to freshness. The rabbit quickly replaces the meat with a stone and the man, dragging the meat on the end of a long vine, doesn't notice. The little boy asks Uncle Remus if that isn't stealing and Uncle Remus replies that the rabbit - with no way to catch meat for himself - had to do what he could to look after himself. He later admits that little boy is getting to be too much for him. Uncle Remus is then gone for several days and the little boy says that Miss Sally had said that perhaps Uncle Remus was looking for work elsewhere, but the old man says Miss Sally herself wrote a "pass" for him to visit relatives. He then picks up with the next story, in which Brer Rabbit tricks Brer Fox into thinking that Mr. Man has returned so that the fox runs away and the rabbit has all the meat to himself.



Sectino 2, Nights with Uncle Remus, 25 through 38

Sectino 2, Nights with Uncle Remus, 25 through 38 Summary

Uncle Remus gives way to a story from African Jack called "Why the Alligator's Back Is Rough", in which Brer Rabbit taunts the alligator into running through a brush fire, making the bumps on his back and tail. A few nights later, the little boy is accompanied to the cabin by Aunt Tempy, who remains to hear the story of "Brother Wolf Says Grace", in which the wolf catches the rabbit but the rabbit urges him to say grace before killing him, and when the wolf folds his hands the rabbit runs away. Aunt Tempy says that the story reminds her of the old times and that she'll visit more often.

On another night, the talk turns to "Spirits, Seen and Unseen", and Aunt Tempy says she hopes to never be haunted, that folks who want to argue with her will do it while they live. The tales of Daddy Jack frighten the little boy until Remus shakes his head at Daddy Jack, who is rumored to be a conjurer himself, reassures the little boy. Uncle Remus, pretending he has business at the house, walks the little boy home.

In "Brother Rabbit and His Famous Foot", Uncle Remus says that Brer Rabbit got his own lucky rabbit foot from a rabbit witch named Mammy-Bammy Big-Money and had to steal it back from Brer Wolf. That night, the little boy dreams that African Jack is Mammy-Bammy Big-Money in disguise.

"In Some Lady's Garden" is the story of Brer Rabbit, who introduces himself to Mr. Man's daughter as Billy Malone in order to gain access to her garden. He is caught in a box trap but Brer Fox comes by and Brer Rabbit yells out to him to run, since Mr. Man has him trapped and is forcing him to eat mutton. Naturally, the fox trades places and when the little boy asks what becomes of the fox, Uncle Remus says it's all he can do to keep up with Brer Rabbit.

Daddy Jack offers his own version in "Brother Possum Gets In Trouble". He says that the rabbit went into the garden through an open gate which was then shut tight, trapping him. After several times of talking the man's daughter into letting him out, the farmer catches the rabbit in the act and ties him up in a sack, hanging in a tree. The rabbit convinces the possum to trade places with him by saying he can hear singing up there, and the farmer is surprised to find the rabbit gone and the possum in the bag. The little boy asks what happened to the possum and Uncle Remus says he doesn't know, but that he'd like to be eating some cooked possum right now.

In "Why the Guinea-Fowls Are Speckled", Uncle Remus tells the story of a lion stalking a cow and some guineas who raised such a dust around the cow that the lion - almost blinded - ran directly into the cow's horn and was killed. The cow showed her



appreciation by granting the fowl's request, letting down some milk and sprinkling them so that they were forever more gray speckled and no longer stood out to their enemies.

One night, Uncle Remus tells how "Brother Rabbit Submits to a Test", fearing that he's gone feeble. The witch rabbit tells him to catch a squirrel and then a rattle snake, and he does both, to which she says that if he were any craftier, the world would be in trouble.

The little boy one day asks Uncle Remus for another story about Big-Money but that it be for him alone. Uncle Remus relates "Brother Wolf Falls Victim" in which Big-Money pretends to be dead and Brer Rabbit convinces Brer Wolf to eat her. At the first bite, Big-Money raises up and drops into the water, and that's the last of Brer Wolf. In "Brother Rabbit and the Mosquitoes", Uncle Remus says that several animals visit the Wolf home hoping for a chance with the daughter of the house, but the father wolf won't allow anyone to remain if they slap at the many mosquitoes. Brer Rabbit arrives and begins a tale of his grandfather who was spotted, here (and he slaps at his face to kill a mosquito) and here and here (slapping at mosquitoes all over his body). The wolves think he's telling the story and he's given permission to "go after" the daughter, though Uncle Remus claims not to know if he ever did. In the story of "The Pimmerly Plum", Brer Fox catches Brer Terrapin, who tells him they're directly under a "Primmerly Plum" tree, though it's a sycamore. He convinces the fox that if he sits with his mouth open and waits, a plum will fall in. The turtle escapes while the wolf waits, and later shares his joke with Brer Rabbit.

Sectino 2, Nights with Uncle Remus, 25 through 38 Analysis

The author interrupts the story telling to explain that African Jack - or Daddy Jack as the little boy calls him - is the overseer of the family's southern plantation. He came from Africa at age twenty and his speech is somewhat different from that of Uncle Remus. There follows an escapade in which Jack, who is at least eighty but looks older, chases 'Tildy, saying that Uncle Remus says he can have her if he can catch her. 'Tildy later makes a point of accompanying the little boy to Uncle Remus's cabin but says he'd better not try anything since she's promised Miss Sally she won't kill the old man.

Later, 'Tildy tells "A Ghost Story" of an old man who stole the coins off an old woman's eyes before burying her, prompting the woman to return searching for the money. As she reaches the end of the story, she jumps at African Jack, scaring him and making the point that she's gotten even.

Uncle Remus begins the story of "Brother Rabbit's Love Charm", but Daddy Jack picks it up, saying that the rabbit gathered an elephant tusk, alligator tooth, and rice-bud bill, tied together in a bag, so that he can marry the girl he wants. 'Tildy responds that if anyone on the plantation is carrying a love charm, it won't work.



Section 2, Nights With Uncle Remus, 39 through 52

Section 2, Nights With Uncle Remus, 39 through 52 Summary

Uncle Remus next tells the story of "Brother Rabbit Gets the Provisions", in which the rabbit and wolf, being very hungry, agree to sell first the wolf's mama and then the rabbit's in order to buy food. As they arrive home with their first load of vittles, the wolf is cold and the rabbit, pointing to the setting sun, sends him off to warm by the "fire". When the wolf returns, the rabbit is holding horse tails that he's stuck in the mud, claiming that the horses and wagons sank in quicksand. The animals go home, the wolf hungry and the rabbit with the wagon of food.

In Daddy Jack's version, called "Cutta Cord-La", the two agree to eat their grandmothers but Brer Rabbit hides his and the wolf goes to great lengths to find her but doesn't manage to eat her, ending up himself with a broken neck. In "Aunt Tempy's Story", the two load their families onto the wagon but the rabbits are soon freed and hop away, with Brer Rabbit claiming Miss Fox had eaten them. Again, the rabbit ends up with the food but in this version the fox winds up dead.

In "The Fire Test", Uncle Remus tells that Brer Wolf once managed to eat all of Brer Rabbit's children and Brer Terrapin then calls for the fire test. The wolf volunteers to dig the pit, bring the brush and kindle the fire. All the animals jump across, proving their innocence, except the wolf who falls in.

In "How Brother Fox Was Too Smart", the fox and rabbit meet up with a wildcat - an animal the fox isn't familiar with until that point. The fox is scratched but survives. In "Brother Wolf Gets in a Warm Place", the animals are excluding Brer Rabbit from everything and he builds a steeple on his house. The animals are soon curious and he hauls Brer Terrapin up with a plough line, but then the rabbit's wife throws scalding water on the wolf as he's being hauled up. Uncle Remus refuses to say whether it was on purpose, but says the wolf's hair didn't grow back for some time. "Brother Wolf Still in Trouble" picks up from when the wolf returns. Brer Rabbit helps remove a rock that has the wolf pinned and the wolf catches him, but Brer Rabbit asks that the turtle decide what should happen next and they agree. The turtle has them show him exactly how the wolf was trapped then says the rabbit had no right to bother the wolf, and the rabbit and turtle leave the wolf there.

In "Brer Rabbit Lays in His Beef Supply", the rabbit and fox decide to share a cow, but the rabbit sends the fox off in search of a bucket and takes some pieces for himself, then in search of the man who stole those pieces while he steals more. The fox chases the rabbit into a tree, asking the buzzard to watch the rabbit, but the rabbit throws sand in the buzzard's eyes and gets away. The story picks up in "Brer Rabbit and Mr.



Wildcat", in which Brer Rabbit, caught by Brer Wildcat, promises to call turkeys close so that the wildcat can catch them, but the turkeys don't get close enough and fly when the wildcat pounces.

The story of "Mr. Benjamin Ram Defends Himself" is the tale of the wolf and fox who argue about who is brave enough to kill the ram. Both are afraid but finally tie themselves together and go to the house where the ram thanks the fox for bringing him wolf meat, which his woman is crying for. This makes the wolf run, dragging the fox behind him.

Aunt Tempy offers her own version of the cow story in "Brother Rabbit Pretends to be Poisoned". In this story, the rabbit and wolf agree to share the cow but the rabbit eats a bit and pretends to die of poison, prompting the wolf to leave the cow, and the rabbit takes it all. Aunt Tempy picks up the story in "More Trouble for Brother Wolf". In this tale, the wolf chases the rabbit into a hollow log. The rabbit runs unseen out the other end and the wolf sets fire to the log. The rabbit later tricks the wolf into going into the hollow log and setting fire to himself, claiming that honey will cover and protect the wolf.

Section 2, Nights With Uncle Remus, 39 through 52 Analysis

Daddy Jack tells the story of a woman who takes the huge egg of a snake and the snake plots revenge. When the woman has a child, she knows not to leave the little girl alone because the snake will get her. Finally the snake does and the woman kills the snake, retrieving the child who is not hurt. Several of the stories seem to have an African slant to them that seem reminiscent of the Negro's African culture, likely handed down from the ancestors who truly came from Africa as Daddy Jack himself did. The little boy confides in Uncle Remus that he doesn't like those stories and that if it's possible for Daddy Jack to come from Africa the snakes might also make the trip.

Uncle Remus tells the story of how "Brother Rabbit Outdoes Mr. Man", apparently prompted by the idea that rabbits now stay away from people but there was a time people were well-advised to avoid Brer Rabbit. In this tale, he tricks Mr. Man out of a wagon load of money by riding in the back of the wagon and flinging out money, covering the sound by yelling out. At the end of the tale, Uncle Remus says the most amazing part is that Brer Rabbit didn't end up with Mr. Man's wagon and horses as well.



Section 2, Nights With Uncle Remus 53 through 71

Section 2, Nights With Uncle Remus 53 through 71 Summary

Uncle Remus relates "Brother Rabbit Takes a Walk" as the time the rabbit - who asks that the dog's mouth be sewed shut to keep his teeth from showing, backs out of doing the sewing. When Daddy Jack returns, Uncle Remus says there's no getting along with the little boy unless you're telling stories, which prompts "Old Grinny Granny Wolf", in which Brer Rabbit boils Granny Wolf and tricks Brer Wolf into eating her. The little boy says that he doesn't believe Brer Rabbit would do such a thing but Jack says it was probably during "dog days", but Uncle Remus says Brer Rabbit was tough when pushed.

"How Wattle Weasel Was Caught" is Uncle Remus's tale of how the weasel fooled all the creatures into letting him eat the butter except Brer Rabbit, who tricked the weasel into letting his tail be tied to a tree.

"Brother Rabbit Ties Mr. Lion" is Aunt Tempy's story of how Brer Rabbit - in retaliation for having run him off a watering spot, tells Brer Lion that a storm is coming, tricking him into allowing the rabbit to tie him to a tree. Daddy Jack tells the story of "Mr. Lion's Sad Predicament", and though the little boy doesn't really understand the story, Uncle Remus says the point is that there's no need in making a fuss while there's a ruckus going on.

In "Brer Rabbit Gets Brother Fox's Dinner", Uncle Remus says that the rabbit helps the fox roof his house and nails the fox's tail to the roof, helping himself then to the fox's dinner. Daddy Jack tells the story of "How the Bear Nursed the Little Alligator", in which a young bear, captured by an alligator, promises to be nurse to the baby alligators in return for his life, and eats the babies instead.

Aunt Tempy tells the story of "Brother Wolf and the Horned Cattle", in which the wolf disguised himself in order to attend a meeting of the horned animals but was outted by Brer Rabbit. The wolf tried to get even by playing dead, but the rabbit notes that dead folks smile when they get visits and when the wolf smiles, the rabbit runs away.

Uncle Remus tells the story of "Brother Fox and the White Muscadines", in which the rabbit helps the fox climb the tree where he's stuck and injures himself getting down. Uncle Remus tells "Mr. Hawk and Brother Buzzard" in which the buzzard, waiting for the Lord to provide breakfast, remains perched on a tree while the hawk dives for a chicken and is killed. Uncle Remus says the buzzard ate the hawk and that it was a "round about way" of getting chicken.



Uncle Remus tells the story how "Old Brother Terrapin Gets Some Fish" from Brer Mink, who'd caught the fish. The turtle challenges the mink to a contest, and while the mink holds his breath underwater, the turtle eats the fish then accuses the mink of having done so, saying he's as bad as Brer Rabbit. He next tells how "Brother Fox Makes a Narrow Escape", about a time when there was a shortage of water and the fox, covered in molasses and leaves, scares the other animals from the only spring until he washes off his disguise and is chased himself.

In "Brother Fox's Fish-Trap", Brer Rabbit steals the fish from the fox's trap and when the fox catches him in the act, the rabbit escapes by putting the pole of his own boat against the front of the fox's boat.

Section 2, Nights With Uncle Remus 53 through 71 Analysis

One night, the little boy tells Uncle Remus that his mother had told him there weren't lions in Georgia or even in the entire country, and Uncle Remus tells "The Origin of the Ocean". He says that the lion and rabbit were hunting together and got separated by a creek, at which time the rabbit "cut the string" that held the banks of the creek together and forming the ocean. The little boy asks why the creek banks were tied together and Uncle Remus says he can't answer who tied it, only who cut it.

In keeping with these explanations, 'Tildy tells "Why Mr. Dog Runs Brother Rabbit" in which the rabbit needed shoes, convinces the dog to let him try on his and runs away with him - and that dogs till now will chase a rabbit and yell for him to return the shoes.

'Tildy tells the story of "Mr. Hawk and Brother Rabbit", in which the hawk catches the rabbit but releases him briefly for the rabbit to show where his gold is buried, allowing the rabbit to run into the briar patch. Uncle Remus "corrects" the story, saying that the rabbit got away by promising to help the hawk catch partridges and by getting fatter to make a better meal for the hawk. Daddy Jack picks up the story, telling about the habits of the "sma't bud".

On the night before Christmas Even, Uncle Remus and the little boy learn that 'Tildy and Daddy Jack are going to marry. 'Tildy seems to feel the need to defend her decision, saying someone has to look after him and that if she doesn't take on the task, no one will. She also says that she can't think of another way to get rid of him. Uncle Remus says it seems to him that she knows what she put in her sack, but she doesn't know what's in there now, which prompts the story of "Brother Rabbit Rescues Brother Terrapin". Brer Fox catches the terrapin and puts him in a bag. When Brer Rabbit sees the bag, he wants to know what's in it, and tells the fox that someone is in his watermelon patch and checks out the bag while the fox is gone. When he discovers that it's the turtle, he sets his friend free and puts a hornet nest in its place so that Brer Fox is stung repeatedly when he opens the sack. The next night, the little boy and Uncle Remus attend the marriage of 'Tildy and Daddy Jack to learn that 'Tildy expects that Miss Sally will miss her because her replacement won't be as good as she. The day of

festivities ends with singing and the little boy, sound asleep before it's over, is carried home by Uncle Remus.



Section 3, Daddy Jake, the Runaway

Section 3, Daddy Jake, the Runaway Summary

The storytellers and listeners change so that Crazy Sue tells children named Lillian and Lucien of the time Brer Coon pretended to be dead in order to catch a frog. Uncle Remus next shocks the little boy with "How a Witch Was Caught", so he tells "The Little Boy and His Dogs". A little boy kills two panthers dressed as women and then finds his kidnapped sister living with the bears, killing them and setting his sister free. Next is "How the Black Snake Caught the Wolf", in which Brer Rabbit finds where the snake keeps his stash of goodies, eats his fill, and pretends to keep watch while the wolf eats, only to let the wolf be caught by the snake and punished.

In "Uncle Remus's Wonder Story", a witch-wolf tries to marry a man who finds her out when the cow fears her. The little boy once asks why the animals don't talk as they once did and Uncle Remus, imitating several birds but adding words to the sounds, insists they do in "How the Birds Talk".

In "Why the Guineas Stay Awake", Uncle Remus offers another of the tales explaining life. He says the fox once caught the guineas asleep and that since that time, they never do, which is why they can be heard at all hours of the night. Uncle Remus tells "How the Terrapin Was Taught to Fly", in which the buzzard carried him up for practice flights, making the terrapin believe he could fly, and when he falls on his only solo attempt, says he can fly but can't land. The little boy likes these stories and is disappointed each time Uncle Remus stops. Another is "The Creature with No Claws", which turns out to be a wildcat.

Section 3, Daddy Jake, the Runaway Analysis

Uncle Remus reveals his own prejudices in "The Foolish Woman", saying that the little boy had better watch for the "nigger w'at wrap der ha'r wid a string", and telling of a contrary woman who broke dishes because they rattled and threw away a mess of fish because they stared at her with open eyes. He next tells "The Adventures of Simon and Susanna", and declares to the little boy that it doesn't matter whether the characters of the story were black or white, that the story remains the same.

The little boy is caught up in the tales and seems disappointed when Brer Rabbit is replaced as "king of the creeturs" by Brer Polecat, though the rabbit - as always - comes out on top in "Brother Rabbit and the Gingercakes".



Section 4, Uncle Remus and His Friends

Section 4, Uncle Remus and His Friends Summary

In "Mrs. Partridge Has a Fit", Brer Rabbit finds her nest and Mrs. Partridge, in an effort to save most of her eggs, breaks into one, flaps like a chicken with its head cut off, and yells that it's snake eggs, prompting the rabbit to run away.

Uncle Remus then tells "Why Brother Fox's Legs Are Black" - that in an effort to get fire he fell asleep on top of the hole where the sun goes down for the night's rest - and "Why Brother Bull Growls and Grumbles" - that he'd changed into a man but a boy found his secret and forced him back to his bull form. In "Brother Rabbit Frightens Brother Tiger", Brer Rabbit and Brer Elephant make a plan, whereby the elephant appears to be tied to a tree and the rabbit biting him, scaring the tiger away. In "Brother Billy Goat Eats His Dinner", the goat scares away the wolf by saying that he's eating a rock when he's really just chewing his cud. In "The King That Talked Biggity", Uncle Remus makes the point that big talks gets one nothing. In "Brother Rabbit's Mint", the rabbit convinces the fox that when the "behime" wheels of a particular kind of wagon catch up with the front wheels, money falls from the place where they rub each other, which makes Brer Fox run along beside wagons looking for his opportunity.

In "Brother Mud Turtle's Trickery", the fox is trying to figure out how to get into the turtle's shell and the turtle tricks the fox into putting him back in the mud. In "A Fool for Luck", Uncle Remus tells of a man who watched in amazement as squirrels stole his corn and when he tracked them to the tree where they were hiding the corn, found honey, money, and killed several animals. When the little boy seems skeptical, Uncle Remus says that if it wasn't a true story, people wouldn't be still talking about it.

Section 4, Uncle Remus and His Friends Analysis

Uncle Remus, seeing that the little boy didn't want to share his cake with his little brother, tells of "Brother Bear and the Honey Orchard", in which Brer Bear found lots of honey but refused to share. With the news that a hurricane is coming, the rabbit ties the bear to a tree and the other animals feast on the honey. In addressing laziness, Uncle Remus tells of "Death and the Negro Man", in which a man who was lazy and quarrelsome said he wouldn't be good even if Mr. Death himself arrived. His master, dressed in a white sheet, pretended to be death coming for the man, and the man changed so that he was the hardest worker anywhere.

Uncle Remus explains a particular saying in "According to How the Drop Falls", saying that one woman visited a neighbor with a bad cold and it sometimes appears that the watering of her eyes might drip into the bread dough. When she asks if the other will join her for some bread, the answer was "It's 'cordin' ter how de drap falls".



Section 5, Told by Uncle Remus

Section 5, Told by Uncle Remus Summary

In "Why Mr. Cricket Has Elbows on His Legs," Uncle Remus tells of a cricket who sought refuge from the cold in a chimney and so angered a man with his music that the man poured boiling water through the cracks, weakening the chimney mud so that it fell. In "How Wiley Wolf Rode in the Bag", Uncle Remus says that Wiley Wolf - acting on the advice of his father - was to have trapped Riley Rabbit in a bag but the little wolf got trapped inside instead and Brer Wolf, thinking it was the rabbit, dropped the bag and all into boiling water.

In "Brother Rabbit's Laughing Place", Uncle Remus tells the story of how the other creatures wanted to know where the laughing place was. The little boy says that he has a laughing place all his own and that it's where Uncle Remus is, which makes Uncle Remus proud.

When Uncle Remus tells of "Brother Remus and the Chickens", in which the rabbit takes the chickens belonging to Mr. Man and blames it on Brer Fox, the little boy fails to see the humor, though Uncle Remus says animals don't know the difference between "taking" and "stealing". The story of "Mr. Cricket and the Other Creatures" tells of the cricket's brag that he can make all the other creatures run and jumps, one at a time, onto their ears making a noise like a hurricane, and so making them run.

In the story of when "Brother Rabbit Was King", Uncle Remus says that the lion who was king went on a fishing trip, leaving the rabbit as king in his place. When dog came and complained that he wasn't being treated well, the rabbit had turpentine and red pepper rubbed all over him, prompting the dog - until this day - to always be smelling in case the rabbit is near.

In "Why the Turkey Buzzard Is Bald-Headed", Uncle Remus says that the buzzard once shared a house with the rabbit and when it came time to feed the buzzard children, the rabbit feared he'd be eaten and finally threw hot ashes on the head of Miss Buzzard.

In the story of "Brother Rabbit and Brother Bull-Frog", the frog has a long tail. When the frog causes the rabbit to fall in the water, the rabbit plans revenge and eventually chops off the frog's long tail. In "Why Mr. Dog Is Tame", Uncle Remus explains why the dog was invited into the house - thus becoming a pet - while the wolf, who showed his teeth at Mr. Man while trying to smile, was left outside.

Section 5, Told by Uncle Remus Analysis

Time passes and the little boy becomes a man. Uncle Remus then begins telling stories to the next generation, though it takes some time to win this little boy's trust and to



overcome what Remus says is the little boy's "abnormal training" insisted on by his mother.

When Uncle Remus tells the story of "How Old Craney-Crow Lost His Head," the little boy says that his mother calls the stories "fables". It's noteworthy that his grandmother, Miss Sally, encouraged the little boy to be near Uncle Remus in hopes that he would hear the stories. Uncle Remus picks up the story in "Brother Fox Follows the Fashion", though it seems the little boy may have had trouble following the complex whimsy of these tales.

In the story of "Brother Deer and King Sun's Daughter", Uncle Remus begins by asking the little boy "how many times" there are and finally has to explain that there's sometimes and bed times and cold times, and that he can't count how many in all. In the next story, "Brother Rabbit's Cradle", the little boy confides that he knows both Uncle Remus and Miss Sally think his mother is odd. Uncle Remus isn't always certain what kind of tales the little boy will enjoy and the child often asks very adult questions, which also perplexes Uncle Remus.

The little boy doubts the stories and Uncle Remus tells of Brother Rabbit and Miss Nancy, how the rabbit had planted a seed of doubt in the mind of Mr. Man regarding his daughter and prompting him to kick the girl out, leaving "me an' Brer Rabbit" in the neighborhood, according to Uncle Remus.



Section 6, The Tales of Uncle Remus and Brer Rabbit

Section 6, The Tales of Uncle Remus and Brer Rabbit Summary

In "The Creetures Go to the Barbecue", Uncle Remus instructs the little boy on the need to find out who is throwing a barbecue. In "Brer Rabbit's Frolic", the rabbit hears the plans made by the other animals and interrupts, tricking them into going uninvited to Miss Meadows, who promptly orders them to leave. Uncle Remus next tells of "Brother Bear's Big House", in which the polecat manages to get inside the bear's fine, large, warm home and drives the bears right out. In "How Mr. Lion Lost His Wool", Uncle Remus says the lion was once covered with wool but scalded off the long coat right up to his shoulders - where until today his mane remains.

Section 6, The Tales of Uncle Remus and Brer Rabbit Analysis

When the little boy is frightened by a storm, Uncle Remus tells the story of how the rabbit arranged a "race" between the dust, rain, and wind and that the other animals were blown, pelted and muddied in the process, prompting another race - that of the rabbit trying to get away. When the little boy asks which of the elements won, Uncle Remus notes that the rain calls out to the dust which responds that it's fallen in the mud and can't run any more. To get even, the animals try to trick the rabbit by pretending to find gold, but he runs away, saying he's going home to get a sack to carry whatever gold they leave for him.



Section 7, Uncle Remus and the Little Boy

Section 7, Uncle Remus and the Little Boy Summary

In "Brer Rabbit Has Trouble with the Moon", Uncle Remus says there was a time when all the animals lived in the sky until the day Unk Moon sent the rabbit to earth with a message for Mr. Man that the moon was tired and was going to take a break. When the rabbit returned with Mr. Man's reply, the moon was so angry that he hit the rabbit in the face with a shovel and the rabbit scratched the moon - both scars that can still be seen. And when the rabbit told of the wonderful things on Mr. Man's farm, all the animals left the sky to live on earth.

The little boy says that his mama said the lion would have no hair at all after having been scalded, prompting Uncle Remus to tell the child that he should have asked the one who told the story if he had questions. Uncle Remus then picks up the story, saying that the rabbit, hearing that the animals are all out to get him, tells the lion that he had visited the witch and was told that the one thing that would cure the lion was the skin of his best friend and the lion sends the animals for the fox's skin.

In "How Brer Rabbit Saved Brer Bear's Life", the bear catches the rabbit but is then tricked into turning him loose, then urges the bear to prop up a particular rock before it smashes him, again getting away. "The Story of Brer Fox and Mr. Cricket" tells of a race between the fox and cricket, though the cricket wins because he takes a hop, a skip and a jump, and on this occasion just did that a little faster.

Section 7, Uncle Remus and the Little Boy Analysis

Uncle Remus, upon hearing the little boy say he wished he could fly, tells "The Story of the Doodang", an animal that could do everything but cried because he wanted to be able to swim, and once that was accomplished, cried to be able to fly. The buzzards later say that they can show where the bones of the doodang lie now. The little boy says he still wishes he could fly and Uncle Remus, seeming certain the little boy didn't understand the moral, tells him to fly inside to his mama.

In the story of "Tenchy Tiny Duck", Uncle Remus relates that a small duck finds a purse of money that would have been important to her family but a rich man takes it. The duck goes to retrieve the money, toting the fox, wolf, a ladder, the river, and bees in her satchel and using each to get out of some particular predicament until the rich man's wife was certain the duck was a witch and the man returned the money. The duck was fed so well as her reward that she would associate with no one except the family cat - Muscovy. The little boy later asks how the duck got the ladder in the satchel and Uncle Remus responds that it's a story.



Section 8, Uncle Remus Returns

Section 8, Uncle Remus Returns Summary

In the story of "Brother Rabbit, Brother Fox and the Two Fat Pullets", Uncle Remus tells that the rabbit writes a letter that he purports to be the will of Brer Fox, giving the rabbit two fat pullets. When he gets them, the little boy wants to know if that's the end of the story and Uncle Remus says some people might stop there but that he won't, and goes on to weave the rest of the story, but not before the two of them talk about the creatures and their characteristics. Uncle Remus realizes that the little boy, having accepted that the animals could talk and reason, couldn't accept that they didn't know right from wrong.

As Uncle Remus picks up the tale, Mr. and Mrs. Fox are planning revenge for the rabbit getting one of their chickens. The rabbit overhears and goes to where Mrs. Fox is sweeping, asking how she liked the calico material sent to her by the king. Mrs. Fox beats on her husband for not giving her the material before they figure out that the rabbit has again fooled them. The rabbit is then called to remove a thorn from the king's paw and tells him that the thing that will cure him is a fresh fox hide, then urges the king to send the carcass to Mrs. Fox - that it might be of some comfort to the poor woman.

There follows the story of "The Most Beautiful Bird in the World", about a bird who believes it is beautiful and that, to this day, a bird who is preening itself makes people wonder if that bird has returned.

Section 8, Uncle Remus Returns Analysis

The little boy wants to believe in Uncle Remus's stories, but his mother seems to be pushing him past childhood fantasies of this type. When the little boy one day asks Uncle Remus to help him come to terms with his yearning to believe and his mother's insistence, Uncle Remus points out that a rabbit with tusks and claws wouldn't be able to run and play as rabbits do. He then relates "Brother Rabbit's Bear Hunt", in which the rabbit tells the fox and wolf that he's going on a bear hunt. Fearing they'll be laughed at if they don't go along, they agree to go. The rabbit tells the bear that there's to be a bear hunt and that it was the fox and wolf's idea. The bear agrees to be there as well and to play along with the scene that the rabbit is chasing him. When he reaches the fox and wolf, they stand firm - again fearing that they'll be laughed at for cowards if they run. The little boy asks if the bear hurt them bad and Uncle Remus says he ripped them open "frum year-socket ter tail-holt," and that they were "mighty nigh ruint".



Section 9, Seven Tales of Uncle Remus

Section 9, Seven Tales of Uncle Remus Summary

Uncle Remus next tells the story of "Mr. Crow and Brother Buzzard", in which the two birds - bragging about their individual abilities - have a contest to see who can sing the longest. When they are both tired and hungry, Mrs. Crow flies over and Mr. Crow sings out to her to have the family bring him food. Mr. Buzzard has no one to do the same for him so he grows faint from hunger and falls from the tree, and doesn't sing even until today.

Uncle Remus tells Miss Sally that the little boy - the first little boy and therefore Miss Sally's son - has been into mischief and is sent to get the boy. He takes pity on the boy and helps him get cleaned up before taking him to the house, then tells the story of "How Brother Bear Exposed Brother Rabbit at the Barbecue", in which the rabbit hides food in his cloak during an eating contest. He next tells how "Brother Bear Learns to Comb His Head", in which the rabbit tells him that his wife chops off his head every morning, fixes his hair, then puts his head back on, prompting the bear to tell his wife to do the same, which she does. When Uncle Remus then takes the little boy home, Miss Sally is no longer angry at him.

In the final two stories, Uncle Remus explains "Why Brother Bear Is a Wrestler," and tells how "Brother Rabbit Doesn't Go to See Aunt Nancy", in which Uncle Remus offers to take the little boy on a journey. The little boy asks how they're going to travel and Uncle Remus says they'll sit where they are and his words will do the work - and they did.

Section 9, Seven Tales of Uncle Remus Analysis

Uncle Remus tells two stories that he says aren't his own. He says a man named Zeemzy - who was called Jimps - told the stories and Uncle Remus says that he therefore can't stand behind them as he would if the stories were his own. He has trouble remembering where the man is from and it takes the little boy's help to come up with the word "Jamaica". The first story is of "Mr. Goat's Short Tail", in which the ram and the dog, caught in a rain storm, happen upon the wolf's house. As the ram and dog run away, they come to a creek and the ram fears crossing. The dog changes him into a rock with the touch of a rabbit's foot, then swims across, soon tricking the wolf into throwing the "rock" across the river, which turns into a goat upon impact, thus breaking off the animal's tail.

Uncle Remus says that the tales Jimps told don't sound right to him, though they were told when Uncle Remus was just a child himself. He next tells the complicated tale of "The Baby and the Pumpkins", in which a baby - really a witch - eats all the food up from a particular family.



Characters

Uncle Remus appears in All

Uncle Remus has apparently been with Miss Sally's family for many years. In the story of "Brother Fox Catches Mr. Horse," he begins by saying that he'd watched Miss Sally - the lady of the house and the first little boy's mother - rush around, wiping away dust that wasn't there and plumping pillows that didn't need anything. Uncle Remus says he knows Miss Sally well enough to know that her actions mean that she's tired of Uncle Remus sitting around the house or that she's waiting for a chance to "preach" to her husband. The little boy is amazed at the statement and Uncle Remus says he's known Miss Sally for years. His age is never given, though Uncle Remus at one point says that folks his age know more than they can remember.

Uncle Remus continually insists that his stories are true. He says that he stands behind them - except for those told to him by the Jamaican. He readily launches into his stories at the slightest question from any of the children and if no one asks, will begin a conversation to prompt them to ask so that he can tell his stories. He seems to have an almost limitless supply of stories to draw from.

Miss Sally appears in All

The woman who had apparently owned Uncle Remus before slaves were set free. Uncle Remus remains on the plantation, though the details of the situation aren't known. What is known is that Uncle Remus at one point tells of Miss Sally calling for him and when he arrives, she wants him to make her an "ash cake". Uncle Remus says that he does and then Miss Sally sits down in the floor, just as she did as a child, with an ash cake and buttermilk, and eats the treat, though she tells Uncle Remus after she's done that it wasn't cooked right. Uncle Remus says that Miss Sally knows about the neighbors, the Favers, who are worthless people. Uncle Remus says that's the complete opposite of the Abercromies, Miss Sally's people.

The First Little Boy appears in Sections 1 through 4, 9

Though never called by name, the little boy was Miss Sally's son. He loves the stories told by Uncle Remus and spends many hours near the old man in order to hear more of the tales. He often interrupts to ask questions and pesters Uncle Remus to tell a story, though Uncle Remus seldom needs any real encouragement. The little boy is often in trouble and Uncle Remus stands up for him, often successfully, as in when the little boy was sent from the dinner table and Uncle Remus tells the little boy's father that the child is "crying his eyes out", prompting the father to let the child remain in Uncle Remus's cabin and sending a plate of food for him. It's important to note that Uncle Remus does correct the child himself when he believes it to be necessary.



Second Little Boy appears in Sections 5 through 8

Miss Sally's grandson and the son of the first little boy. Uncle Remus says there's an incredible difference between the two boys, with the second being so well-mannered that Uncle Remus sometimes doesn't know how to act around the child. This boy also asks questions, but the questions are different. Rather than asking things that will prompt explanations in the form of additional stories, this child wants to know why the animals steal and why they can get away with being cruel to each other.

Daddy Jack appears in Sections 2 and 3

Also called African Jack, he came from Africa as a man of about twenty and remains an important person on the river plantation, though he is advanced in years. He also tells stories and his dialect varies greatly from that of Uncle Remus - a sign of his African ties. He courts a young woman on the plantation and eventually wins her favor, though there seems to be an incredible difference in their ages.

Aunt Tempy appears in Sections 2 and 3

Aunt Tempy is an important figure in the household. It's noted that she and Uncle Remus are the two most important of the slaves and apparently remained once they were freed. It seems there is a rivalry between the two, though they carefully conceal their jealousy of each other. Aunt Tempy tells a few stories and admits that she's as bad as the children for wanting to hear others tell the tales.

'Tildy appears in Sections 2 and 3

Another of the servants, she is pursued by Daddy Jack and pretends to have nothing but animosity for the old man, though she eventually gives in to his pursuit and marries him. She also loves to hear the stories and ventures out with one of her own.

The Second Little Boy's Mama appears in Sections 5 through 8

Miss Sally's daughter-in-law. She is very strict with the little boy, and when he relates pieces of the tales told by Uncle Remus, she dismisses them and urges the little boy to do the same. She is - at least to some degree - tender hearted when it comes to the little boy, as noted on the occasion when Uncle Remus is talking to the child through the window because he's being forced to remain in the parlor and the little boy's mama realizes that she was harsh and lets him go out to play.



Calryappears in Section 9

The Negro girl who is charged with watching after the first little boy. She is asleep when the little boy gets into trouble and Uncle Remus chastises her for it, threatening to tell on her. She begs him not to and he promises to relent, but only if she helps him get the little boy cleaned up before taking him in to his mama.

Brer Rabbitappears in All

Uncle Remus presents Brer Rabbit as one of the most important characters of his stories. The author suggests that this is a reflection of the fact that the rabbit was a central figure in African myth and folklore.



Objects/Places

Georgia appears in All

Where Uncle Remus and the family lives.

Uncle Remus's Cabin appears in All

Where most of the tales are told.

Atlanta appears in Section 4

Where Uncle Remus stays with the family while the first little boy prepares to get married.

The River Plantation appears in Sections 2 through 4

A part of the plantation where Uncle Remus lives; this is where Daddy Jack lives.

Africa appears in Section 2

Where Daddy Jack comes from.

The Nursery appears in Section 1

Where the first little boy is confined following his illness and where Uncle Remus visits and tells stories during his convalescence.

The Laughing Place appears in Section 5

An imaginary place described by Brer Rabbit. The second little boy tells Uncle Remus that his own laughing place is wherever Uncle Remus happens to be.

The Big Road appears in Section 1

The place where Brer Fox puts the "tar baby" to catch Brer Rabbit.



The Briar Patch appears in Section 1

Where Brer Fox throws Brer Rabbit, allowing him to escape after being caught by the tar baby.

Mr. Man's Garden appears in Section 2

Where Brer Rabbit is captured but tricks the little girl into letting him leave.



Themes

Coming of Age

The fact that the little boy in the first sections grows into a man and that Uncle Remus continues telling stories to the son of that first little boy makes this a prime example of the coming of age theme. In turn, each little boy ages as well. The first little boy spends as much time as he can with Uncle Remus, apparently of his own accord, and comes to learn of the old man's ways so that he can prompt a story or get Uncle Remus to continue a story almost any time. It takes the second little boy some time to come to that point, but he also eventually learns how to prompt stories. The sheer fact of both little boys growing is only one point of this theme because others also "come of age".

Miss Sally, for example, passes from her time of motherhood into her time as a grandmother. When her grandson is in trouble and is "jailed" in the parlor, Miss Sally breaks all the household rules, opening the curtains and the windows in that room so that the child has plenty of air flow and sunshine without any concern to the fact that the exposure to sunshine could fade the carpet.

Uncle Remus seems unchanging but does offer a glimpse of himself as a youngster, listening to the stories of Jimps, the Jamaican who told stories that Uncle Remus later repeats.

The Importance of the Folk Tales

There is no doubt that Uncle Remus's ancestors believed heavily in the folklore that was handed down across the generations. These stories likely changed many times with each telling, taking on the personalities and imaginations of the current storyteller while retaining at least a thread of the original story as it was told. This fact is borne out by the central character in many of the tales - Brer Rabbit - who was also a central figure in African mythology.

The tales have a variety of purposes. There seems to be little doubt that at least some are merely for entertainment value, having only some surprise at the end and leading the listener into a fictional place where animals lead lives very similar to humans but without the same societal restraints. On the other hand, many have a moral, such as the story of the "doodang", who craved a new skill that cost him his life, offering the idea that it's best to be happy with what you have rather than longing always for more. Still others offered an explanation for some particular fact. For example, Uncle Remus and Daddy Jack tell stories that explain why the buzzard doesn't sing, why the crickets legs are jointed, and why the alligator has humps on its back.



Affection

Uncle Remus loves to tell stories but there seems to be little doubt that he holds a genuine affection for children, and especially for the children of the "big house". It's noted that once he and the second little boy become acquainted, the little boy places his head on Uncle Remus's shoulders, just as many other children had done over the years. Uncle Remus often holds both the little boys on his knees and sometimes carries the first little boy home when he falls asleep in Uncle Remus's cabin, listening to stories or just spending time with the old man.

A similar kind of affection is shown between Uncle Remus and others, including Miss Sally. It seems obvious that he highly respects Miss Sally, but that - having known her since she was a child herself - it is an affection built on many years of being acquainted. The fact is that Miss Sally apparently feels that same affection for Uncle Remus. When it's raining outside so that he can't comfortably get out, she sends supper to him from the big house. That point is noted by the girl who brings the meal, saying that she doesn't understand why Uncle Remus gets this kind of attention.

Style

Point of View

The story is told in third person. The sections about the real-life times of Uncle Remus and his friends are told with a limited view, typically only focusing on Uncle Remus. There are some facts that the reader learns - such as the fact that the little boy is being "jailed" in the parlor - through conversations held between Uncle Remus and someone else. Other pieces of information are offered merely as facts from the author of the book - such as the relationship between Uncle Remus and Aunt Tempy and the fact that the two were secretly jealous of each other though they never allowed those emotions to show.

In the make-believe sections of the book, the reader is limited to whatever point of view offered by Uncle Remus. This typically focuses on one particular creature and is often Brer Rabbit, though some stories are about other animals who then become the focus character. The fact of this limited view is actually vital to the telling of the story and is appropriate.

Setting

The time is just following the Civil War. Before telling the story of "Why Mr. Possum Has No Hair on His Tail", Uncle Remus chastises the little boy for playing with some neighbor children named "Faver." Apparently, the little boy had been told by his mother and grandmother to stay away from those children and the little boy justifies his transgression by saying that they'd told him they had a pistol. Uncle Remus says it's a wonder the little boy wasn't injured, and reminds him that the Favers were "no 'count 'fo' de war, en dey wa'n't no 'count enduring' er de war, and dey ain't no 'count afterwards". This "war" is apparently the American Civil War. There is also a reference to "Jim Crow", which only came to popularity in the 1860s, meaning Uncle Remus is likely telling these stories sometime between the 1870s and 1900. There are other points - that Uncle Remus says Miss Sally threatens to "put me on the block" that could indicate the time was before the end of the Civil War. That's likely just the old man's reminiscing of how things were before freedom.

The location is Georgia. Uncle Remus, when telling the story of the witches that had been riding one of the horses in "A Plantation Witch", says the Cajuns can recognize a witch. He says that he can't but that he's been around long enough to know that when he sees coon tracks in the creek, he knows a coon has passed by. These references seem to indicate a setting in the south. Later, in the story of "How Brother Fox Was Too Smart", Uncle Remus says that a neighbor named Jim Favers probably knows exactly what the inside of the jails of "dish yer State er Jawjy" look like.



It's important to remember that there's a "real" location and the imaginary time and place in which the animals talked and carried on as people. For its purpose - the telling of stories - this "place" is also appropriate.

Language and Meaning

The book is written true to the dialect of the old South and is believable in terms of what an uneducated black man of the time might have sounded like. There are some words that may be completely unfamiliar to the reader. In some cases, a person reasonably familiar with the dialect of the time period and region may be able to sound out the words to figure out the word represented. Few people will find the book easy to read in the beginning, but a person who is willing to continue reading may find that they are soon able to fully understand the stories. While it can be argued that there's no need to remain true to the dialect, it seems appropriate, if somewhat disconcerting at times. The author's own notes - such as facts inserted about Uncle Remus or questions posed by the little boys - are written in proper English, though still sometimes slightly old-fashioned. These are in stark contrast to the old man's speech which serves to constantly remind the reader of the old man's life and origins.

The excessive use of the word "nigger", though not a slanderous word in the days of Uncle Remus's tales, may also be a problem for some readers.

Structure

The book is divided into nine sections, Uncle Remus; Nights With Uncle Remus; Daddy Jake, the Runaway; Uncle Remus and His Friends; Told By Uncle Remus; Uncle Remus and Brer Rabbit; Uncle Remus and the Little Boy; Uncle Remus Returns; and Seven Tales of Uncle Remus. These are in turn divided into 186 stories. The stories range from just more than a page to as many as seven or more pages. The stories are sometimes prefaced by some piece of information, often of complete unimportance to the reader, who is only interested in the stories, but that explain the relationship between Uncle Remus and those around him as well as life on the plantation.

The stories are typically given very straightforward names that give the reader some idea of what is to be expected from that story. Others are rather vague, such as "Aunt Tempy's Story", which alerts the reader only to the fact that Aunt Tempy is going to be the story teller.



Quotes

"W'en old man Rabbit say 'scoot,' dey scooted, en w'en ole Miss Rabbit say 'scat,' dey scatted. Dey did dat. En dey kep' der cloze clean, and day ain't had no smut on der nose nudder." A Story About Little Rabbits, p. 66

"De Bad Man, honey; de Ole Boy hisse'f right fresh from de ridjun w'at you year Miss Sally reading 'bout. He done hide his hawns, en his tail, en his hoof, en he come dress up like w'ite folks." Jacky-My-Lantern, p. 99

"Hoe-cake ain't cook done twel hit's turnt over a couple er times." Brother Fox Catches Mr. Horse, p. 115

"Dey tells me,' continued Uncle Remus rubbing his hands together in token of great satisfaction, - 'dey tells me dat w'en Brer Tarrypin ketch holt, hit got ter thunder 'fo' he let go. All I know, Brer Tarrypin git Brer Fox by de foot, en he hilt 'im dar." Brother Fox Covets the Quills, p. 164

"W'en you en me en dish yer chile yer wants 'simmons, we goes out and shakes de tree. En ef dey er good en ripe, down dey comes, en ef dey er good en gree, dar dey stays. But dish yer yuther nigger, he too smart fer dat. He des tuck'n tuck he stan' und' de tree, en he open he mouf, he did, en he wait fer de 'simmons fer ter drap in dar. Dey ain't none drap in yet,' continued Uncle Remus, gently knocking the cold ashes out of his pipe; 'en w'at's mo', dey ain't none gwine ter drap in dar.'" African Jack, p. 203

"Fol' yo' han's und' yo' chin, Brer Wolf, en shet yo' eyes en say: 'Bles us en bine us, en put us in crack whar de Ole Boiy can't fin' us.'" Brother Wolf Says Grace, p. 214

"Brer Rabbit, he come a-lip pity-clippitin' 'long de big road, and he ain't got no waggin full er money. Ole Brer Rabbit, he up'n tuck a notion dat dey's sump'n' wrong somers, kaze ef dey wan'n't, he 'ud have des ez much waggin and money ez Mr. Man." Brother Rabbit Outdoes Mr. Man, p. 316

"Daddy Jack, however, cared nothing for any effect he might produce. He told the story for the story's sake, and he made no pause for the purpose of gauging the appreciation of his audience." Old Grinny Granny Wolf, p. 322

"He ax hisse'f, he did, but he duno. He wunder en he wunder, yit de more he wunder de mo' he dunno." Brother Rabbit Rescues Brother Terrapin, p. 373



"He was dictatorial, overbearing and quarrelsome. These words do not describe Uncle Remus's attitude, but no other words will do. Though he was dictatorial, overbearing and quarrelsome, he was not ever grim. Beneath everything he said there was a current of respect and affection that was thoroughly understood and appreciated." How the Birds Talk, p. 421

"No, suh, I don't like um, kaze folks can't play no tricks, ner git even wid der neighbors, without hurtin' somebody's feelin's, er brakin' some law er nudder, er gwine 'g'inst what de preacher say." Brother Mud Turtle's Trickery, p. 527

"'Den you ain't got um,' he went on, as the child drew away and pretended to hold his pocket tight; 'you ain't got um, an' you can't git um. I done been had um, but I got ter nippy-nappin' one night, an' some un come 'long an' tuck um - some nimmer man, I speck, kaze dey wuz a bit fat 'possum mixed up wid um, an' a heap er yuther things liable ter make a nigger's mouf water. Yasser!'" How Wiley Wolf Rode in the Bag, p. 557

"He say dat whar they use ter git meat, dey now gits bones, an' mighty few er dem, an' whar dey use ter be fat, dey now has ter lean up ag'in'de fence, an' lean mighty hard, ef dey wanter make a shadder." When Brother Rabbit Was King, p. 595

"Ef he got sense, er ef he ain't got none, it don't make no diffunce now, kaze de ol' times is done gone, an' ef 'twa'n't for deze ol' tales nobody wouldn't know dat de yever wuz any ol' times." Brother Rabbit's Bear Hunt, p. 731



Topics for Discussion

Why was story telling such a popular thing on plantations? Who, besides Uncle Remus, tells stories?

Some of the stories explain facts of life, such as why animals are how they are. List three of these. Are they acceptable folklore explanations? Why or why not?

Describe the relationship between Brer Rabbit and Brer Fox. Between Brer Rabbit and the rest of his neighbors. How is it that Brer Rabbit is sometimes friends with his neighbors and sometimes at odds?

Compare the rabbits in the stories to people. What are the similarities? The differences? What particular difference bothers the second little boy?

Describe three stories that end with a moral. Are these stories that could be useful as moral stories today? Why or why not?

Who was Miss Sally? Describe her relationship with Uncle Remus. Do you believe this to be typical? Believable? Why or why not?

Choose three of the stories that most appeal to you. Why do you enjoy them?